

19 AUG 1950

ANNUAL REPORT

upon the

PUBLIC HEALTH AND

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION

of

THE RURAL DISTRICT OF ABERGAVENNY

FOR THE YEAR 1949.



By

F. C. R. HARVEY, B.A., B.Sc., M.D., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health

and Medical Officer of Health No. 10 Area.

Medical Officer of Health's Report, 1949.

COUNCIL OFFICES,

MONK STREET,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ABERGAVENNY.

I beg herewith to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Abergavenny Rural District.

The implementation of Part III. of the National Health Service Act, 1946 (Health Services provided by Local Health Authorities) has been revolutionary. The creation of two large Health Authorities i.e., County Councils and County Borough Councils, did not affect, substantially, Abergavenny Rural District, but, in many respects has given to the Council more scope to better its Public Health Services.

Under the de-centralisation of Health Services agreed upon by the County Council and the District Councils and the Ministry, a full time Medical Officer of Health was appointed to Abergavenny Rural District from 1st January, 1949. The duties of the Medical Officer of Health include, by agreement, supervision of the Public Health Departments of the other three Local Authorities (i.e., Abergavenny Borough, Usk U.D.C., and Pontypool R.D.C.) which, together, form No. 10 Health Area within the Administrative County of Monmouth.

The work of the Medical Officer of Health is very varied, and as the County Council had to retain seven eleventh's of the Medical Officer's time for Child Welfare Clinics and School medical Inspections, four eleventh's of the time is allocated to sanitary work to be spread over the four Councils. It is realised that the allocation of the time for the various functions of the Medical Officer of Health is not completely satisfactory, as more time should be given for Public Health work, but, it must be remembered, that the National Health Service is the most progressive Service ever enforced in any country and, therefore, liable to readjustment in the future. Moreover, the great shortage of doctors prepared to join the Public Health Services is a handicap, and I personally feel that if salaries are not adequately increased in the near future, shortage of doctors may imperil the working of the whole system.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

Babies can be seen once a week at the Presbyterian Hall, Abergavenny; expectant mothers can be seen fortnightly at the same Centre. Two Health Visitors are in attendance, and Welfare Food can be obtained at the Centre with the exception of National Dried Food, Cod Liver Oil and Orange Juice, which can be obtained either at the Food Office or at the W.V.S. Headquarters.

The monthly average number of babies seen at the Child Welfare Clinic was 193. This figure includes cases from the Abergavenny Borough.

Domiciliary Midwifery Service.

Under the re-allocation of the District Midwifery Service, two District Midwives are resident in the Rural District. The monthly average of nursing visits was 47.

District Nursing Service.

There is one District Nurse resident in the Rural District. The monthly average number of nursing visits was 260.

Health Visiting.

There are 2 Health Visitors doing the routine domiciliary visits, School Inspections (cleanliness of body and clothes), and attends the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

Night Nursing Service.

The County Council had voted a small sum for the provision of a Night Nursing Service. The Night Nurses, male and female, are to be in possession of certain minimum qualifications.

Domestic Help Service.

The County Council has provided a Domestic Help Service which is intended for those cases where there is illness, and where there is no able-bodied relative who could give the necessary assistance in the household.

The Service has been useful in providing assistance to aged persons and cases of Chronic sick, who otherwise would have had to

be admitted to Hospitals, thereby helping to relieve the pressure upon hospital accommodation.

The Service is under the direction of the Area Committee Clerk (Mr. D. A. Lewis). Applicants for the Service are assessed to repay the cost of the Service in relation to their income ; persons with a gross income of less than £3/0/0 per week receive the Service free of charge.

The hours allocated to each case are recommended after personal investigation by the District Nurse, Midwife, or Health Visitor, and are submitted to me for approval. Cases where the recommendation exceeds 30 hours per week have to be submitted by the Area Committee Clerk to the County Health Committee for investigation, except maternity cases.

There are approximately 12 Domestic Helps in the Rural District ; all are engaged on a Temporary Part-time basis. The number of cases attended was 80 ; the average monthly number of hours worked was 2,220, in No. 10 Area.

Ambulance Service.

The County Council took over the responsibility of the Ambulance Service in 1948. Abergavenny Rural District was served by two St. John ambulances with four drivers, and they provided the Ambulance Services for the Borough and adjacent area, under the central control of the County Ambulance Officer at Caerleon.

Vaccination against Smallpox and Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria has been carried out at the surgeries of the General Practitioners, and at the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres ; in both cases free of charge.

The figures for vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria for the Rural District are as follows :

Vaccination against Smallpox, 1949

Age Groups—	Under 1 yr.	1 to 4 yrs.	5 to 14 yrs.	Over 15 yrs.	Total
	15	8	3	9	35

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Age Groups—	Under 5 yrs.	5 to 14 yrs.	Total.
	61	8	69

Since the compulsory vaccination against smallpox has been abolished, the Rural District of Abergavenny, like the rest of the country, followed the trend of a decrease in vaccination; from the public health point of view it is very regrettable. As shown in two outbreaks of imported smallpox, we are not free of the possibility of a more serious outbreak. Great encouragement is given to mothers for both vaccination against smallpox and immunisation against diphtheria, but the results are more encouraging for immunisation than for vaccination.

Health Education.

The early part of the last century saw the birth of Public Health as we know it now. The main object being the provision of wholesome water supply, sanitation, and notification of infectious diseases. At the beginning of this century the influence of the environment became more apparent and more emphasis was given to this new factor. We realise now that we cannot complete the picture of ideal health without education. Under the auspices of the Central Council for Health Education, Local Health Authorities have undertaken a campaign to improve the knowledge of the Community on health matters, and a County Health Education Officer was appointed in 1948. We must improve our body cleanliness and home cleanliness, including an improvement in our handling of Food.

Some forms of health education have been undertaken, including display of posters and distribution of leaflets, and I feel this is one of our major tasks in public health to educate the people on all aspects of life.

Mental Health Service.

A County Psychiatrist was appointed in 1948 for the purpose of a Mental Health Service. This Service is co-ordinated with the Regional Hospital Board, and Hospital Management Committees.

No Adult Guidance Clinics are held in Abergavenny Rural District, but individual cases, patients suffering from early nervous strain, and who are finding difficulty in adjusting themselves either in their home or at their work, are seen by Dr. J. Newcombe the County Psychiatrist. Cases considered too far advanced are referred to the Regional Hospital Board Psychiatrist.

Welfare Services.

The Welfare Officer of No. 10 Area caters for the needs of Abergavenny Rural District as regards Welfare Services, which come within the provisions of the National Assistance Act, 1948.

Medical Appliances.

The location of the Medical Appliances Depots for the Rural District are St. John's Ambulance Hall, Abergavenny, Mrs. Tossell, Uplands, Govilon, Mrs. Knight, Llanthony, and Mrs. Bayliss, 24, Long Row, Pwlldu, Nr. Blaenavon.

Location of Medical Officer of Health and Area Health Office.

The County Council has now taken over Leven House, Abergavenny and the Services for which I am responsible will be operated from there, together with the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre, in the near future.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Area	...	...	...	62,685 Acres
Population	...	...	...	8,693
Number of Inhabited Houses (according to Rate Book on 31st December, 1949)...			...	2,127

BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

Total number of Live Births	...	...	130
Legitimate	...	...	124
Illegitimate	...	...	6
Total number of Still Births (Legitimate)	...	...	7
Total number of Deaths	...	...	78
Total number of Infant Deaths (under 1 year)	...	...	2
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of population	...	...	14.9
Death Rate per 1,000 of population...	...	...	8.9
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 Live Births	...	...	53.8
Infant Mortality Rate ditto.	...	...	15.3

Notifiable Infectious Diseases (excluding Tuberculosis)

Age Groups

Disease.	Age 0-5	Age 5-10	Age 10-15	Age 15-25	Over 25	Total	Adm'ted to Hospital
Scarlet Fever ...	5	4	3	1	1	14	13
Poliomyelitis ...	...	...	...	...	2	2	2
Dysentery ...	...	...	...	...	2	2	...
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1
Whooping Cough ...	5	2	...	...	...	7	...
Measles ...	12	5	1	...	1	19	...
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Influenzal Pneumonia ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Totals ...	23	11	4	1	8	47	16

TUBERCULOSIS.

Total number of cases notified in 1949 ... 21

Pulmonary ... 19 (13 patients in Mental Hospital)

Non-Pulmonary ... 2

Total number of Deaths from

Tuberculosis during 1949 ... 3

Deaths of patients in the Mental Hospital are not included since they are residents of another area.

Discussion of the Tables.

The population of the Abergavenny Rural District has increased since 1947. (Population 1947: 7,582; 1949: 8,693).

The Live Birth Rate is higher than in 1948, 14.9 against 11.3, and the Death Rate per 1,000 of population has decreased substantially, 8.9 against 10.9.

Infectious Diseases.

There were two cases of Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis). They were treated at a Fever Hospital and recovered.

There were 14 cases of Scarlet Fever and 19 cases of Measles.

There were 21 cases of Tuberculosis notified in 1949, of these 13 were in a Mental Hospital; this is an increase on 1948 when 8 were notified and 2 were in a Mental Hospital.

Once more I wish to stress the need for adequate accommodation for cases discharged from sanatoria. Tuberculosis is one of the main problems of the Public Health Departments, and it is only with the close co-operation of the various Departments, and the provision of houses to these cases, that we can hope to stamp out this disease.

With the exception of Tuberculosis, the sanitary condition on the whole was satisfactory in the area.

I have the honour to be,
Ycur obedient Servant,
F. C. R. HARVEY,
Medical Officer of Health.

I. Housing.

Number of Houses owned by Local Authority in December, 1949	143
Number of Houses in course of erection ...	22
Number of Houses completed during the year ...	28
Number of Houses for which sanction has been given. but had not been commenced	70
Number of Houses erected by Private Enterprise ...	6
Number of Houses inspected for defects in 1949 ...	31
Number of Houses repaired as a result of action by the Local Authority	9
Number of Houses in respect of which Statutory Notices were served to carry out repairs ...	10

II. Water Supply.

Owing to the variations in altitude and the number of scattered, sparsely populated villages and hamlets, the water supply of the area is one of the Authority's biggest problems, particularly as the number of houses increase. The sources of water supply are numerous ; mainly springs. In the larger villages, e.g., Mardy, Llanvihangel Crucorney, Llanover and Pandy; the supply is sufficient and the quality up to standard; but there are a

number of smaller villages and outlying dwelling houses where the supply is inadequate, or where analysis reports are not always satisfactory.

The main piped supplies owned by the Local Authority are :—

1. **Govilon.** Blakes Hydraulic Ram has been taken out of commission, as a connection was taken off the Abertillery Water Board's 16" main through a $\frac{3}{4}$ " Break Pressure Valve (set at 80lbs.) to supply the 56 houses on the zone between the 350ft. and 600ft. contour O.D. The properties on the lower zone numbering 84, are supplied from the Ffynon Batric Spring by gravitation.

A 3" connection was made in the Newport Corporation's new 28" main near the Carpenter's Shop, Govilon.

The inhabitants of this part of the district obtained their water supply from the Forge Spout. To afford a constant supply, a 1" pipe was laid from the Railway Bridge to the Forge Cottages, for a distance of 366 yards.

2. **Pwlldu.** A 2,000 gals. storage tank at the source of the spring in adit. supplies 35 premises by means of 6 stand-pipes. This is the only supply in the district showing any plumbo-solvent action; and as a precaution galvanised iron pipes are used.

During the year an improvement was made by taking a water supply to the premises known as Big House, Pwlldu. This necessitated the laying of some 200ft of $\frac{1}{2}$ " pipe.

3. **Garndyrys.** Spring with stand-pipe supplies ten premises; with an extension for 60 yards to a stand-pipe fixed near Garndyrys Cottage.
4. **Allws.** A spring is utilised to raise water by a ram to tanks with stand-pipes supplying 17 premises. Negotiations were commenced to tap the Abertillery Water Board's 16" main when passing at this point, to afford a supply to the houses in this vicinity. The Abertillery Water Main was tapped and a $\frac{3}{4}$ " Break Pressure Valve inserted to afford a water supply to the inhabitants in this area.

5. **Llanfoist.** The supply for this area is drawn from the Newport Corporation's main ; 3 and 4 inch pipes conveying a supply to 85 premises and the Factory ; with stand-pipes for the few premises not connected to the main. The average consumption for private dwellings is approximately 7,000 gallons per day.
6. **Llanellen.** A spring connected to a $1\frac{1}{4}$ " pipe supplies 16 premises. The quality is satisfactory, but the quantity is not always adequate.
7. **Mardy.** Tynywern spring connected to 5, 4 and 3 inch pipes supplies 86 premises, all of which are connected to the main ; with $\frac{3}{4}$ " branch pipes supplying Mardy Park and the Mill.
During the year a $\frac{3}{4}$ " connection was made in the 3" main to afford a supply to Parsonage Farm, Llantilio Pertholey.
A $\frac{1}{2}$ " connection was taken off the 3" main to Nos. 1 & 2, Blorenge View, Mardy, these premises having previously received their supply from a private source.
An extension has also been made to your Housing Site, in Midway Lane.
8. **Llanvihangel Crucorney.** The overflow from the Tynywern Spring is utilised to raise 12,000 gallons per day by hydrostats through 3" pipes to a 20,000 gallon concrete water tower. 70 premises are all connected to the main.
During the year a $\frac{1}{2}$ " connection was taken off the rising main to afford a water supply to Little Llwyn Gwyn, Llanvihangel Crucorney.
A $\frac{1}{2}$ " connection was taken off the 3" main coming from the 20,000 gallon storage tank to afford a water supply to Bridge Farm.
A $\frac{1}{2}$ " connection was taken off the 3" rising main from the Hydrostats to the New Bungalow near Llanvihangel Station.
9. **Llanvetherine.** A spring with 1" pipe to tank and stand-pipe supplies 5 dwellings near the main road. Another spring supplies 17 premises in Caggle Street area by means of two stand-pipes ; some of the dwellings being at too high a level for gravitation.

10. **Llangattock Lingoed.** A spring with small tank and $\frac{3}{4}$ " pipe to a stand-pipe, supplies 12 premises ; the level of the source being too low for connection into the houses.
11. **Bettws Newydd.** A spring with storage tank is connected to 10 premises in the Village.
12. **Penlanlas.** A spring on the side of the Deri is utilised to supply Penlanlas Cottages and the Farm.

The main privately owned piped supplies are as follows :—

1. **Llanover Estate.** Llanover Village is supplied by a 2" pipe from Coedyfelin Spring to a 25,000 gallon storage tank, which serves 34 premises. New Inn spring supplies another 23 premises in or near the village. A series of springs on the Nant, Llanellen, supplies about 80 premises over a large area of Llanellen, Llangattock-nigh-Usk and Llanvair Cross. The quality is satisfactory, but pressure insufficient for some of the higher area. Cwm Uchaf spring supplies another 9 premises by a 1" pipe.

The Consulting Engineers received instructions to prepare the necessary detailed plans for the Llanover Water Scheme. The Districts which will be afforded a piped water supply are as follows :— Llanellen, Llanover, Llangattock-nigh-Usk, Llanvair Kilgeddin, Bryngwyn, Llanddewi Rhydderch, Llanarth & Clytha.

2. **Llanarth Estate.** A spring near Upper House supplies 19 premises through a $2\frac{1}{2}$ " pipe ; this supply proves inadequate in drought periods. Springs at Court-y-gelly supply the villages of Llanarth and Great Oak, and a spring near Great House supplies the latter, and raises water by a ram to Cefn Coch.

During the year a water supply was taken from the Llanarth Main to the two Agricultural Houses in the vicinity.

3. **Grosmont.** Supply is carried by $1\frac{1}{2}$ " pipe from spring to a tank at upper end of the village ; and from there by gravitation to 20 premises through 2, $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch pipes.

Apart from the piped supplies there are a number of wells in the district supplying outlying dwellings.

4. **Plough Well.** The Well in this area, having been disused for the past 20 years, was thoroughly cleaned out, and a Deep Well Pump fixed.

During the year repairs were carried to the following Wells :—
Llanvair Kilgeddin, Brynygwenin, Llangattock Lingoed, and Llanvapley.

Water Samples. During the year nine samples of water were obtained and submitted to the Pathologist for analysis.

Pen-y-val Hospital. During the year negotiations were commenced for the conveying of a water supply to this Hospital from the 4" main at the top of the Hereford Road.

Abergavenny Borough. During the year 5,971,500 gallons of water were supplied to the Borough of Abergavenny from the Tynywern Springs.

III. **Sewerage.**

The only Sewerage works are those for the villages of Llanvihangel Crucorney and Mardy, with Disposal Works near Abergavenny Junction Station.

Llanfoist Factory has its own Sewerage Plant.

IV. **Milk Supply.**

During the year six samples of milk were obtained and submitted to the Pathologist for analysis.

- V. **Refuse Collection.** During the year this scheme was extended to include the villages of Llanvapley and Llanvihangel Gobion.

- VI. **Meat Inspection.** No inspection of carcasses takes place in the Rural District, as all slaughtering of animals is carried out at the Abergavenny Abattoir.

- VII. **Public Convenience, Govilon.** During the year a Public Convenience was erected in the Village of Govilon. This work was carried out by direct labour.

VIII. **Rodent Control.** The Council employ a full-time Rodent Operative, and surveys and treatments are carried out under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Rodent Department).

It is pleasing to report that these duties are being performed satisfactorily.

Factories and Workshops.

17 inspections were made and conditions were found to be satisfactory.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

T. ATTWELL, Sanitary Surveyor.

